

# SMART THINKING

Summer 2020

## Hot Tips for Grilling Safety

Whether you use charcoal, gas, pellets, or hardwood, one thing is certain – as the summer weather heats up, so do our grills. According to the National Fire Protection Association, July is the peak month for grilling related home fires. Before firing up the grill, check out these hot tips for grilling safety.

**Know Your Grill.** Read the owner's manual and familiarize yourself with how to properly operate.

**Keep It Clean.** Failure to clean is the leading cause of structure fires caused by grills. Clean your grill grates and underlying drip trays after each use. Built up grease and food remains are combustible and create a fire hazard.

**Line Check.** At the beginning of the grilling season, check the propane line for leaks or damage. Use a spray bottle to apply a soap and water solution to the line and fittings. Turn on the propane and if you see bubbles or smell gas, there could be a leak. Turn off the gas and have your grill serviced by a professional before using.

**Spacing.** Never use a grill indoors (including the garage). Always grill outside and keep a safe distance away from buildings, deck railings, and overhanging trees.

**Light It Right.** Always keep the lid open on a gas grill during ignition. If the grill fails to light or the flame goes out, shut the propane off and wait 5 minutes before re-lighting.

**One And Done.** If using lighter fluid with a charcoal grill, only use it to initially light the charcoal. Never apply more lighter fluid once the fire has already started.

**Be Ready.** Keep a fire extinguisher handy in case a fire does occur.

**Stand Guard.** Never leave a grill unattended while it is in use. Position the grill in an area away from where children or pets will be playing.

**Cool Down.** Allow your grill to cool down completely before putting the cover back on or moving into a storage area.

## Look Twice – Save a Life Motorcycle & Bicycle Awareness

- Always watch for cyclist and motorcycles, especially at intersections.
- Do not crowd a cyclist. Give them ample room in case they need to maneuver potholes or other obstacles.
- The small profile of a motorcycle makes it difficult to judge their speed and distance. Assume that a motorcycle is closer than it appears.
- Cyclists can easily get lost in a vehicle's blind spot. Look twice before changing lanes or turning at intersections.
- If passing a cyclist, proceed with extra caution and allow ample space between your vehicle and the bike.
- Motorcycles often slow down by shifting or letting off the throttle, and as a result, brake lights are not a good indicator of deceleration. Allow more following distance as they may slow without visual warning.
- Be aware that turn signals on motorcycles often do not cancel on their own and may be left on accidentally.

The most common reason for a motorcycle fatality is a driver making a left-hand turn when the motorcycle is either:

- Going straight through an intersection;
- Passing the car; or
- Trying to overtake another car.

**Share the road. We all have a right to be on the road and to be safe.**



## Camping Safety

Summer camping with family and friends can be a fun and memorable getaway! Here are some tips to help your family stay safe during your excursion.

### Packing

- A first-aid kit.
- A fire extinguisher. Be sure to check the expiration date.
- Battery operated flashlights or lanterns. Confirm the batteries are working and pack extra.
- Cooking materials and clean water for drinking and cooking if needed.
- Rain gear and tarps.
- Fire starting device.

### Setting Up

- Arrive before nightfall so you have time to inspect the camping site. Survey for uneven terrain, broken glass, and sharp objects. Avoid setting up around areas that may cause trip and fall accidents.
- If you are pitching a tent, avoid being too close to the water, under dead tree limbs, or near insect nests or poisonous plants.

### Campfire Safety

- Check the weather forecast and do not build a fire if conditions are unsafe. Unsafe conditions could be caused by dry conditions (check with the local fire department on burn bans) or excessive wind.
- Review and comply with campground fire policies.
- Keep all combustible items such as fuel tanks and fireworks a safe distance away from the fire.
- Never leave a fire unattended and do not allow children to play nearby.
- Always extinguish the fire completely with dirt or water before sleeping or leaving the campsite.

### Camping with Dogs

- If the campground is dog friendly, always keep your dog on a leash. There may be young children around that could unexpectedly approach your dog.
- Never leave your dog unattended, especially in a hot tent, camper, or car.
- Whether hiking or hanging around the campground, always keep clean drinking water on hand.

### RV/Camper Trailer

- Annually service your RV by a qualified RV service facility. Servicing should include checking the battery, smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, fresh water and waste systems, tires, LP gas system, hitch assemblies, and vehicle hook up.
- At the campground, park on level ground and place wheel chocks before unhitching from your vehicle. Level the camper before allowing anyone to enter.
- Review your escape plan and know how to use the emergency exits.
- Always put the retractable awning away when not in use to prevent sudden wind gusts from disrupting the awning and causing damage or injury.
- Most campgrounds have water and waste hookups. If possible, avoid traveling long distances with full tanks to prevent weight imbalance.
- Prior to traveling, confirm tiedowns, tires, and awnings are in good service and properly secured.

**"MMG's claim process was a model for how accident claims should be handled!"**

– George & Patricia K.

**"I was very pleased with the adjuster for his prompt, courteous, and professional manor taking care of my claim. He treated me very fairly all the while keeping social distancing in these trying times."**

– Kenneth L.